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dropped 'way up somewhere among the nutmeg fields and pie orchards, where a black and white limousine is waitin' for us.

"Sporty color-scheme you got on the car," says I.

"It matches the Holsteins, you know," he explains.

I didn't quite get the point then. But by the time we'd rolled past about a mile of black-and-white fence-posts and come in sight of a group of white buildin's with black trim I begun to suspect that Latham's collection was tinted different.

"My new barn on the left," says Forbes.

"Barn!" says I. "Quit kiddin'! You mean city hall."

It was a barn, though, but nothing like any I'd met before. Sort of a barn de luxe—cement floors, white cement walls, casement windows, steam heat, and a superintendent's office.

"We will go into the dormitory first," says Latham. "It's about milking time. Through here. There! How is that for a herd?"

Well, he got a gasp out of me. Here's a double row of black-and-white cows, fifty on a side, and all lookin' as neat and slick as if they'd just been gone over with shoe-blackin' and a powder-puff. They're in white iron pens, each with a white

reads off, "and twenty-two this mornin'. That's producin' some, ain't it?"

"Lady Blanche has an average of forty-six pounds a day for a month," says Latham.

"Which is she?" I asks.

"Oh, she is in a private dormitory just now," says he, "on another test period. Sorry I can't take you in there, but during a test no one but her attendant sees her."

"Some exclusive cow, eh?" says I.

NEXT we went through the nurseries, where there are dozens of little black-and-white bossies of all sizes. I could have bought one of 'em too, one with four names and a pedigree a foot long, for two or three hundred dollars. Latham even offers to give me one if I'll start a dairy farm.

"Much obliged," says I; "but who am I, that's vague about my own grandfather, to associate with a calf like that? No, thanks, Latham."

Before we were through I had a peek at the outside of Lady Blanche's retreat quarters, and the superintendent showed us her test chart, where they'd put down every ounce of milk she'd given, all the details of her balanced ration, and I don't know but her pulse and temperature.

"But where's our friend Kritt?" I asks.

hallways and turnin' corners, I gets a glimpse of some one dodgin' behind a pile of boxes.

"Wasn't that Kritt?" says I.

"Not in here," says Latham. "He's not allowed."

"Looked like him, anyway," says I. "He made a sudden duck when he saw us."

"The deuce!" says Latham. "We'll just look into this. Here, was it behind these— Well, my man, what does this mean?"

It's Kritt, all right, crouchin' behind the boxes. He straightens up when he's discovered, and scowls at us sullen. He has improved a lot in a few weeks. His face hollows have filled out and he's got some color back. But he don't seem as tame as he did. There's an ugly look in his wide-set eyes, and he's keepin' one hand behind him. He don't seem anxious to talk.

"I say," insists Latham, "what are you doing here?"

Kritt only keeps on scowlin'.

"Come out of that," orders Latham. "You'll not, eh? Well, my man, I'll just—"

"Easy there!" I sings out. "He's got a knife."

Latham steps back hasty.

"Lemme handle him," says I. "Now,

"Har-r-r!" says he. "Gets under your hide, that does, don't it?"

"Why, Kritt!" says I. "What you got against the cow aristocracy?"

"That's just it!" says he. "Cow aristocrats! Honest to Gawd, McCabe, you'd think they was better'n human beings. Why, they're treated better. Do you know what? I was kicked out of the barn just for cussin' a bit before them lady cows. And this Blanche beast! It would make you sick to hear these nuts talk about her—queen of the herd and all that."

"Say, she's got a box-stall better'n any room I ever had in my life—electric lights, a shower bath, and an electric fan to keep the air sweet. You ought to hear 'em fuss over her meals. And if she showed signs of bein' sick there'd be a doctor here on the jump. Think of that! That's the way he takes care of his cows. But the men that make his money for him— Say, you saw the way I looked. And I've seen over a hundred lugged out of the tolly shop with their pipes full of gas. What does he care? But his cows! You mustn't even speak cross to one. Bah! Say, I'll do it yet."

"You'll go to jail; that's where you'll go, my man," speaks up Latham.

"For what?" demands Kritt, sneerin'. "For attempted assault and battery on a cow?"

"Got a point on you there, Latham," says I.

"I'll find a way," says Forbes. "I think the village police justice will take care of this fellow for me."

"Not without a trial," says Kritt. "And I'll tell a few things that maybe won't look nice in print."

Latham bites his lip.

"Oh, come!" says I. "How is it goin' to help for you to go around committin' cowmicide? Mr. Latham didn't invent factories, you know. There's plenty of other concerns just like his. And the bosses don't all run fancy dairies. You don't want to get sent up for malicious mischief, or anything like that. What would Anna say?"

"Huh! Anna!" he snorts. "She's quit me. Married another guy. On my money, too."

"Hard luck!" says I. "But you can't take it out on Mr. Latham's cows."

"I will," says Kritt. "Let him jail me if he dares."

"I dare," says Latham, "but I've just thought of something better. The army. You may take your choice."

"Fine!" says Kritt. "Lead me to the army."

LATHAM takes him at his word. Two minutes more and we've all moved into the office, where we're waitin' for the superintendent to get out his runabout and cart Mr. Kritt off to the nearest recruitin' station.

Just as the machine is ready, he steps up to shake hands with me.

"So long, McCabe," says he. "You meant well by me, anyway. And I'm glad I came here and found out about these blasted cow aristocrats. It's set me to thinkin' things out. I've got it straight now, too. The army's the place for all trash like me. They'll learn us to shoot there. And say, some day we'll show these rotten plutes how well we can do it. It's the only way we'll ever get our rights."

Forbes Latham is near enough to hear some of this. As the car starts off that's takin' Kritt to be a soldier, he shakes his head and remarks:

"A dangerous fellow, Shorty—dangerous! Seems to have developed that streak recently."

"Maybe it's from associatin' with five-thousand-dollar cows," says I. "Got me a bit dizzy myself at first. Before we go, though, I wish you'd blow me to a dipperful of that machine-extracted milk. I could drink a hundred dollars' worth or so about now."

Which was makin' a quick shift, eh? But I didn't want to get in over my head. The Forbes Lathams—and the Kritts. There's so many of 'em, too! But unless you know the answer, which I don't, you just got to dig up something to grin about, ain't you?



"Oh, well, says I, 'tell it to me, then. Now, what's the idea of this—'
I made a quick grab at his wrist and shook that knife on to the floor."

enameled feed-box and drinkin'-can, and the floor is as clean as a ball-room. And every cow has a door-plate with her name and number on it.

"Gosh!" says I, takin' off my hat. "I don't have to be introduced, do I?"

"It could be done," says Forbes. "They are all registered, and I have their certified pedigrees. The milking is going on, you see."

"Is it?" says I. "Where?"

All I could see was a couple of men in white duck suits movin' around quiet with covered pails. Then I spots this arrangement of tubes that seems to be connected with the butter department of some of the cows.

"We use the electric milker, you know," says Latham. "Five units in operation."

I smothered the gasp that time.

Another thing that got me interested was the way they kept books on the cows. As soon as one is pumped dry the milk is weighed and the amount marked up on a chart opposite her name.

"Eighteen pounds for Mercedes II," I

"Got him busy on Lady Blanche's coachin' staff?"

Latham almost shudders.

"Certainly not," says he. "Only our most experienced and trustworthy men are allowed to come in direct contact with the herd. High-grade cows are sensitive animals, you know; and Kritt—I believe he is one of the floor-cleaning gang."

I SUGGESTS that I'd like to have a look at him, to see how he was comin' on, and the superintendent sends out a college hick in shell-rimmed glasses to have him paged. The report is that he can't be found.

"That's odd," says the superintendent, consultin' a work-book.

"Perhaps you can find him while I am taking Professor McCabe through the maternity wards," says Latham.

I didn't even blink at that. Honest, I wouldn't have been surprised at findin' a lot of trained nurses or a twilight sleep outfit. But while we're goin' from one buildin' to another, windin' through long

what's this all about, Kritt? What's the cutlery for, anyway?"

He stares sulky and grumbles something under his breath.

"Ah, come!" says I, talkin' soothin' and edgin' in on him gradual. "You know us, Kritt. We're friends of yours, ain't we?"

"You are, maybe," says Kritt, "but not him."

"Oh, well," says I. "tell it to me, then. Now, what's the idea of this—"

I made a quick grab at his wrist about then and shook that knife on to the floor. It's an eighteen-inch meat-carver.

"Sorry, Kritt," I goes on, "but you acted suspicious. Course, it was an accident, your havin' that knife, but—"

"It wasn't," snarls Kritt. "I was goin' to slit the throat of that blasted cow!"

"Which cow?" says I.

"Ah, that silly beast, Lady Blanche," says he.

Latham gasps.

"You scoundrel!" says he. "Kill Lady Blanche?"

Kritt chuckles hoarse.